IMT Nuremberg Archives

H – 1764

International Court of Justice

H1764 – 0001

Answers to question put to Schwerin-Krosigk

1) I cannot give an exact answer to this. I have known him well since 1932. I saw him sometimes before that time when he was ambassador in London. I could't tell the exact time.
2) I cannot tell.
3) I became Reich Minister of Finance on June 1st 1932 in the Papen Cabinet.
4) Not as far as I know.
5) Von Neurath expected alot from Hitler in the first period of time following 1933; at that time he was also in a position to advise Hitler in foreign affaires. In course of the following years however, Hitler's self-confidence steadily increased, and the possibility to give him effective advice decreased at the same rate. Von Nuerath became more and more uncomfortable to Hitler because he would not give his consent to all of Hitler's plans. This is what breought about the Neurath-Ribbentrop exchange. Neurath always kept up a critical attitude toward National-Socialism. He acknowledged what he believed to be the positive sides of Nationa-Socialism and criticized the bad ones.
6) Von Neurath believed the foreign political aims which in his opinion were necessary for Germany could be attained in peaceable way avoiding the use of force. For these reasons he opposed war.
7) Von Hindenburg did not talk to me about that, but I think it is so.
8) No.
9) No, on the contrary.
10) Yes.
11) Any way, at least when ever he talked about these problems in my presence, he voiced his opinion saying that it was his wish to live in peace with England and France.
12) I know that von Neurath made these attempts and I understand that they were made with Hitler's approval.
13) As far as I know, they certainly agreed with each other in the first years but gradually their views developed toward different ends, and this was eventually the reason why von Neurath was replaced.
14) I never learned that authentically.
15) As there was no longer anything like a cabinet meeting at that time, I had to put up with the amount of news furnished to every ordinary German Citizen.
16) When I became afraid that things might lead up to a war, I wrote a personal letter to Hitler warning him urgently not to let it come to that. At the same time I phoned up von Neurath who was then staying in Wuerttemberg, telling him it was high time for him to come to Berlin himself and bring his personal influence to bear for a peaceable solution of the Sudeten-question.
17) Von Neurath thereupon right away came to Berlin and went to Hitler pleading with all possible energy as he afterward told me, for a peaceful solution. He entreated him to accept Mussolini's proposal for mediation.
18) Yes, I suppose so.
19) No.
20) I did not talk to von Neurath about this, but judging from his general attitude, I presume it is certain.
21) No.

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22) Coming from among such circles himself, he had contact with them which was no doubt tighter as the one he kept up with National-Socialist circles. So he doubtless could exercise a certain influence over those people.
23) It was much regretted because he used to be looked upon as a representative of peaceful foreign policy.
24) No, as regards the party. I had several friends in those circles with whom I was in contact.
25) As far as I remember he talked to me about Frank not considering him adequate to such a position. According to Neurath's opinion it was basically wrong to bring a Sudeten-German in such a leading position, since on account of his former attitude toward the Czechs, he could not be considered enough impartial.
26) I don't remember any further particulars. He, however, complained to me about the SS and SD not being completely under his orders, so that besides his own policy an other policy was underway which he considered not to be the right one.
27) For all I could state, Neurath's relations with Czech President Hacha were good, I should say even friendly. I was able to state that when once or twice I took a ride in the car through the streets of Prague with Neurath, he was greeted with respect.

Hersbruck, May 18, 1946

Graf Schwerin v. Krosigk

(Graf Schwerin von Krosigk)

Interrogated by

Fred E. Fenger

Fred. E. Fenger T/3

CI-Screening Staff
CIE NO 4 Hersbruck

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Questions for Count Schwerin-Krosigk.

1.) Since when do you know Mr. von Neurath?

2.) On which occasion did you make his acquaintance?

3.) When did you become Reich Minister of Finance?

4.) Did Mr. von Neurath have a hand in the negotiations that preceded the confering of the chancellorship upon Hitler?

5.) What was Neurath's attitude toward Hitler and toward National Socialism?

6.) Did Mr. von Neurath pursue an absolute policy of peace and did he reject wholeheartedly all force, not to speak of a policy of war?

7.) Was this the reason that the President of the Reich, von Hindenburg insisted that Mr. von Neurath remained in the Hitler Cabinet as Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs, because the President of the Reich would then have the guarantee for the continuation of the hitherto peaceful policy of the German Reich?

8.) Did you know at the time Hitler came to power, that Hitler had warlike intentions?

9.) Did he, during the first years of his government ever mention such intentions to you?

10.) Were you of the opinion that when Hitler came to power and even at the end of 1937 he was still willing to follow a policy of peace, and that, therefore, all of his peace overtures and offers to the other powers were meant seriously?

11.) Is it known to you, that during these years Hitler had the serious and sincere wish to come to a peaceful understanding, first of all with England but also with France?

12.) Did you know that Mr. von Neurath, with the consent and concurrence of Hitler, has always tried to bring about better relations with England and with France, and has tried to come to a permanent understanding with these two countries?

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13.) Do you know whether in this respect Hitler agreed with von Neurath and his foreign policy?

14.) When did you hear for the first time authentically that Hitler had decided to abandon the policy of peace current up to then and to change to a policy directed toward war?

15.) When did you hear, that Hitler, in the fall of 1938, intended to annex the Sudetenland with force of arms?

16.) What did you do following that? Did you notify immediately von Neurath and did you ask him to change Hitler's mind and to join the efforts of the appo-nents of this plan?

17.) Following this, did von Neurath take any steps? Which?

18.) Is it thanks to these steps of von Neurath that it came to the Munich conference at the end of November 1938?

19.) Did you hear, before you wrote to von Neurath in September 1938, about Hitler's intention to march into Czechoslovakia? If so, when and by whom?

20.) Is it known to you that Mr. von Neurath was opposed to violent action against Czechoslovakia?

21.) After the Munich conference, did you hear about the intention of Hitler to annex the rest of Czechoslova-kia, against his declarations at Munich? If so, by whom? Through whom?

22.) Was Mr. von Neurath in close touch with nationalistic or conservative circles, or did he have any notice-able influence upon them?

23.) What did these circles think about his separation from the ministry of foreign affairs?

24.) Did you have close connections with these circles? Were you a member of the German national party ? (deutschnational)

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25.) You have visited von Neurath several times in Prague. On these occasions has he spoken to you about his relations to Undersecretary K.H. Frank?

26.) Did he tell you, how he had t struggle continuously with the Gestapo, the SD and the SS on account of their carry ig out arbitrary measures and their treatment of the Czechoslovacian population?

27.) During your visits in Prague, have you been able to observe relations between von Neurath and the Czechoslovacian population and the attitude of the latter toward him?

/s/ Dr. Fh. Luedinghausen
.....
(Dr.Frhr.v.Luedinghausen)
Defense Counsel of Defendant
von Neurath

Nuernberg,
10.April 1946

I, Dr.Karl NEUMANN, Br.Exp.F.Permit No.112293, hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the English and German languages; and that the above is a true and correct translation of Document No...

13 April 1946

Dr.Karl NEUMANN
Br.Exp.F.Permit No
112293

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Vorgelegt von :

Dr.Frhr.v.Luedinghausen.

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